



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505

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NOAA Fisheries Seeks Public Comment on a Proposed Rule to Increase Red Snapper Quotas and Potentially Re-open the 2013 Recreational Fishing Season *Comment period ends August 29, 2013*

NOAA Fisheries is seeking public comment on a proposed rule that would increase the commercial and recreational quotas for Gulf of Mexico red snapper and potentially re-open the recreational season for 2013. The proposed rule will publish in the *Federal Register* on August 14, 2013.

The rule would increase the total allowable catch for harvest of red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico from 8.46 million pounds (mp) to 11.0 mp. The commercial quota would be 5.61 mp and the recreational quota would be 5.39 mp. The quotas can be increased because a recent stock assessment for red snapper showed the stock can support higher catches.

The red snapper **commercial** sector is managed with an individual fishing quota (IFQ) program. The increase of 1.295 mp to the commercial quota would be distributed to IFQ shareholders on or shortly after the effective date of the final rule.

The 1.245 mp increase to the **recreational** quota could allow a supplemental red snapper recreational fishing season, if unused quota is available. The supplemental season would open October 1, 2013, and preliminary projections show fishing could be supported for 21 days, but only if landings did not exceed the previous quota during the June season. The final projections will be received in mid-August. If quota is available, the official dates of the supplemental season will be announced in the final rule for this action.

For more information please refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on the NOAA Fisheries Web site.

Request for Comments

The comment period on this proposed rule will open on August 14, 2013. NOAA Fisheries must receive comments no later than **August 29, 2013**. We will address all comments specifically directed to the framework action or the proposed rule in the final rule. You may obtain electronic copies of the proposed rule and the framework action from the NOAA Fisheries Web site:

http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/reef_fish/2013/rs_tac_framework/index.html or the e-Rule Making Portal www.regulation.gov.

How to Submit Comments

You may submit comments on this document, identified by "NOAA-NMFS-2013-0115", by one of the following methods:

- Electronic Submission via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. **After August 14**, go to www.regulations.gov/#!/docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2013-0115, click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments. NOAA Fisheries will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). You can also attach additional files (up to 10MB) in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.
- Mail written comments to Susan Gerhart, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name,

address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible.

This summary is not a substitute for the actual regulations. We encourage you to read the full text of the regulations, available at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>.